

2006 SEASON RECAP

APPEL NAMED SOUTHEAST MVP!!! -- Longtime Albion centerfielder Jesse Appel was named Southeast Section Most Valuable Player for 2006 Sunday night at the annual Home Talent League awards night in Waunakee. The Albion stalwart led the Tigers in batting average, at-bats, hits, and stolen bases, while finishing second in RBIs and runs scored. He had three game-winning RBIs and scored three game-winning runs as well, despite playing most of the season with multiple nagging leg injuries. Appel helped the Tigers win their second division title in three years, and earn their fourth playoff appearance in the last five years. He has been the everyday centerfielder for the Tigers for the past eight seasons. Appel joins ace left-hander Ben Everson as Albion's recent award winners, as Everson also earned Southeast Section MVP honors in 2004.

TIGERS SEASON ENDS IN SECTIONAL FINAL -- The Fort Atkinson Generals advanced to their first Home Talent League Final Four since 1998 with a 6-1 victory over the homestanding Albion Tigers on Sunday. After setting down the Generals in order for the first two innings, Albion starter Mike Nanstad surrendered a single run in the third, and then endured three straight throwing errors in the fourth as Fort extended to a 4-0 lead and never looked back. The Tigers ended their year with an overall record of 22-7, with their second division championship in three years and their third straight playoff appearance.

ALBION TO HOST SECTIONAL FINAL SUNDAY -- The Albion Tigers will play in their first Southeast Section final since 1976 this Sunday when they host the Fort Atkinson Generals at Albion Park. Fort won the East Division of the Section with a 13-3 record, while Albion finished their West Division schedule with 14 wins, including a 1-0 victory against Fort Atkinson on Memorial Day weekend. Pitching will be in focus on Sunday, as Albion's three aces Ben Everson, Mike Nanstad, and Kris Agnew will line up to do battle with Fort. This season, Everson sports a 5-0 record with a 2.01 ERA and 67 strikeouts in 67 innings. Nanstad is 6-1 with a save and a 1.89 ERA in 47.2 innings of work. The hard-throwing right-hander also has 3 complete games and 53 strikeouts. Agnew has worked exclusively out of the bullpen, earning 2 wins and 2 saves in 17 innings of relief, along with 31 strikeouts and a perfect 0.00 ERA.

TIGERS DISPATCH SWINGERS, ADVANCE TO SECTIONAL FINAL -- The Albion Tigers started their playoff run on Sunday by pounding the Whitewater Swingers 14-2 in a game that was shortened to seven innings. The Tigers will host Fort Atkinson next Sunday in the Southeast Sectional Final at Albion Park. With a win, Albion will advance to their fourth Home Talent League Final Four, and their first since 1976. The Albion offense banged out twelve hits and was the star of the day, with four players collecting multiple hits. Leading the way was first baseman Jason Millar with 3 hits, 2 RBIs, and 4 runs scored. Kris Agnew also had 3 hits and 2 RBIs, while Pete Millar added 3 RBIs, including a two-run single that keyed a seven-run third inning for Albion. Matt Millar and Ryan Olstad each added two hits for Albion, while Jesse Appel reached base and scored four times. Albion starter Ben Everson threw five innings to earn the win, while Mike Nanstad pitched the last two innings.

TIGERS HOLD ON FOR 14-2 FINISH -- The Albion Tigers defeated the Oregon Colts 10-9 Tuesday night in Edgerton to wrap up their regular season schedule with an overall record of 21-5, including a 14-2 record in the Southeast Section. Albion jumped out to a big lead early, scoring six runs in the first inning, highlighted by Pete Millar's two-run single. Albion tacked on four more in the third, fueled by Ethan Vaade's two-out, two-run single to center. Starting pitcher Mike Nanstad pitched five innings for the victory, and also added two hits and two RBIs for the Tigers. Kris Agnew struck out the side in the ninth to earn the save.

TIGERS ROLL OVER BLUES -- The Albion Tigers clinched home-field advantage throughout the Southeast Section playoffs with a 10-4 victory over Cambridge on Sunday. The host Blues hung with the Tigers early, taking a 2-0 lead into the sixth inning. But two runs in the sixth followed by a single run in the Albion seventh gave the Tigers the lead. Albion then rode to victory on the strength of a six-run eighth inning and the pitching of Kris Agnew, who earned the win in relief. Offensively, the Tigers launched a balanced attack led by Pete Millar, who reached safely in all five of his plate appearances. Aaron Manogue had a three-hit day for Albion, while Jason Millar drove in two runs, including the go-ahead run in the seventh.

TIGERS COME BACK AGAIN TO CLINCH DIVISION -- The Albion Tigers have had a season full of come-from-behind victories, but possibly none more thrilling than Sunday's 11-10 win against second-place Utica. Marty Johnson doubled home Jesse Appel with the tying run in the ninth, and then scored on a single to left by Ryan Olstad as the Tigers capped yet another thrilling day in front of a large crowd in Albion Park. While most of the Tigers' highlights this year have come on the mound, this week the offense took center stage. Six Tigers (Kris Agnew, Matt Millar, Appel, Pete Millar, Olstad, Ethan Vaade) had two or more hits, led by Agnew, who was 3x4 with an RBI triple in the first, and Vaade with 4 RBIs. The victory, combined with Oregon's loss at Orfordville, gives Albion their second division title in three years and assures them of a playoff game in Albion Park on August 13, against the second-place finisher from the East division of the Southeast Section.

TIGERS BEAT SWINGERS 3-2 -- The Albion Tigers once again rode to victory on a stellar performance by their starting pitcher Sunday and beat the Whitewater Swingers 3-2. Mike Nanstad allowed only three hits and struck out eleven in going the distance for the Tigers, who are now 11-2 in league play and have a showdown with second-place Utica next week. While Nanstad was dominant and fatigue-free in the sweltering heat, the Albion bats came to life at just the right time. Ryan Olstad singled in the only run of the game in the bottom of the fifth, until Whitewater took a 2-1 lead in the top of the seventh. In the bottom of the seventh, however, the Tigers would take the lead for good on RBI singles by Ethan Vaade and Jesse Appel. Appel finished with two hits on the day, as did Albion catcher Matt Millar.

TIGERS COME FROM BEHIND TO SHOCK EVANSVILLE -- The Albion Tigers have made a bad habit of finding themselves desperate in the late innings of ballgames. Fortunately, they also have shown a knack for coming alive in the late innings. The

Evansville Jays were the latest victims on Sunday, as Albion erased a three-run deficit in the bottom of the ninth to win their eighth straight when Andy Zacharias drew a bases loaded walk to drive in Jason Millar with the winning run. The Albion offense banged out 13 hits, led by Ethan Vaade and Ryan Olstad each with three hits. Vaade also added three RBIs, including one in the ninth. Jesse Appel added two doubles, and Jason Millar had a run-scoring triple in the first inning. Kris Agnew threw four stellar innings in relief to earn the win, allowing no runs and striking out eight.

TIGERS POUND LAKE MILLS BEHIND EVERSON, AGNEW -- The Albion Tigers defended their first-place standing in style Thursday night by pounding host Lake Mills 13-1. Once again the guys on the mound were the stars, as starter Ben Everson allowed only a single unearned run over five innings to keep his record perfect for the year. New daddy Kris Agnew returned to action and threw three perfect innings in relief and retired all nine batters he faced, including six of them by strikeout. At the plate it was the Millar family leading the way, with catcher Matt Millar going 3-4 with 5 RBIs. First baseman Jason Millar and designated hitter Pete Millar also had two hits apiece, while pinch hitter Daniel Millar added a two-run single to key a five-run eighth for the Tigers.

NANSTAD DOMINATES MERCHANTS AS TIGERS GO TO 8-1 -- The line for Albion starting pitcher Mike Nanstad against Stoughton on Tuesday said it all - 132 pitches, 9 innings, 11 strikeouts, 2 hits, 3 walks, 1 unearned run. But it took a little late-inning offense for the hard-throwing right-hander to earn his fourth victory of the year and help his team continue its two-game division lead. While Nanstad was shutting down the Stoughton bats, Merchants starter Tyler Wilberg was doing the same to the Albion hitters until the seventh inning. Ryan Olstad had a two-out RBI single to pull the game into a tie, and then two batters later Jesse Appel lined a bases-loaded single to left to score two more for a 3-1 Albion lead.

TIGERS SURPRISE O'S, CONTINUE IN FIRST PLACE -- For eight innings on Sunday, the Orfordville Orioles had the Albion Tigers down and out and looking at a 2-0 deficit. However, a six-run outburst in the top of the ninth led to a 6-2 victory that kept the Tigers on top of the Southeast Section's Western division with a 7-1 record. Ryan Olstad drew a bases-loaded walk to drive in Jim Eastman with the first run for Albion, and Matt Millar scored on a passed ball to even the game up at two. Pete Millar then singled to leftfield to drive in two more runs, and two batters later Marty Johnson doubled to open up a 6-2 lead. On the mound, Albion got the pitching performance they desperately needed, with Ben Everson going the distance for the hard-fought victory. The veteran left-hander had six strikeouts and remains unbeaten for the year.

EVERSON, NANSTAD COMBINE ON ONE-HITTER -- The Albion Tigers relied on a pair of arms and won easily at Stoughton on Sunday by a score of 9-1. Left-hander Ben Everson took a no-hitter into the seventh inning and struck out six to earn the victory, while hard-throwing right-hander Mike Nanstad fanned four while throwing two perfect frames to save the win for first-place Albion. There was no shortage of Albion offensive highlights, either. Jason Millar, Jesse Appel, and Aaron Manogue each had two hits for the Tigers. Millar and Appel had back-to-back RBI singles in a five-run sixth to blow the game open for the visiting Tigers. The win puts Albion at 6-1 in Southeast Section play, good for a half-game lead in the division over Oregon.

TIGERS BEAT ORIOLES 6-5, HOLD ON TO FIRST PLACE -- The Albion Tigers won their third straight one-run game Sunday and beat the Orfordville Orioles 6-5 at Albion Park. The Tigers jumped out early, scoring three runs in the first inning on RBIs by Ethan Vaade, Jason Millar, and Aaron Manogue. Vaade added another RBI in the fourth as well, and also scored the game winner in the eighth when he was driven home by Albion rightfielder Andy Zacharias. Vaade finished the day 3-5 with 2 doubles, 2 RBI, and 2 runs scored. Albion starter Ben Everson threw the first five innings, giving up 2 earned runs and taking a no decision. Mike Nanstad earned the win by throwing four solid innings in relief, striking out five.

TIGERS CLAIM SOLE POSSESSION OF FIRST PLACE -- The Albion Tigers survived a classic pitchers duel Sunday and defeated the Fort Atkinson Generals 1-0. With the win, the Tigers moved to 4-1 in the Southeast Section, good for a half-game lead in their division. Mike Nanstad shut down the Generals for the victory, going the distance with nine strikeouts. Albion scored its lone run in the second when Jesse Appel led off with a triple, and then was squeezed home by Marty Johnson.

TIGERS TAKE OVER FIRST PLACE -- The Albion Tigers pulled into first place on Sunday with a thrilling 7-6 victory at previously unbeaten Evansville. The game ended in the bottom of the ninth when Albion centerfielder Jesse Appel caught a fly ball against the center field wall, then promptly fired to first base to double up the potential tying run. Appel also had a big day at the plate with three hits, while Jason Millar and Marty Johnson both had two-run doubles. Aaron Manogue pitched the final three innings in relief to earn the victory.

TIGERS POUNCE ON DEERFIELD TO START 2-0 -- The Albion Tigers wasted no time in getting off to a good start against Deerfield in their home opener on Sunday. Albion scored seven runs in the first inning and never looked back on their way to a 10-4 win. The big inning included 2-run hits from Kris Agnew and Ryan Olstad, while Jim Eastman and Jason Millar added RBIs as well. On the mound, Ben Everson went 5 innings for the win, allowing 3 runs. Aaron Manogue and Jeff Stone finished up the job in relief.

TIGERS TAKE OPENER AT UTICA, 6-2 -- The Albion Tigers got their Southeast Section schedule off to a good start Sunday in Utica by beating the A's 6-2. Ben Everson and Mike Nanstad combined on a four-hitter and had eight strikeouts in shutting down Utica. The Albion offense got single RBI's from Aaron Manogue, Ethan Vaade, and Jason Millar to build a 3-1 lead, then got a big jolt from Jesse Appel's three-run home run in the 6th inning.